

CLAIMS

1. A method for starting up a flowline suitable
5 for conveying hydrocarbons, said flowline being
extended over the seabed from a wellhead and
terminating at a joint end, said joint end being
suitable for connection to a subsea riser extended in a
catenary, said method comprising a first stage, in
10 which elongation of said flowline is induced;
characterized in that it comprises moreover a
second stage, in which said joint end is fixed with
respect to said seabed to maintain said flowline in its
stretched position.
- 15 2. The method as claimed in claim 1, characterized
in that displacement of said joint end is authorized in
the direction of elongation of said flowline and
displacement of said joint end is prohibited in the
20 opposite direction.
3. The method as claimed in claim 1 or 2,
characterized in that said joint end is guided in
translation during elongation of said flowline.
- 25 4. The method as claimed in any one of claims 1 to
3, characterized in that it comprises moreover a
preliminary stage, in which said flowline is laid on
the seabed and said subsea riser is installed.
- 30 5. The method as claimed in claim 4, characterized
in that said subsea riser is connected to the joint end
during said preliminary stage.
- 35 6. A system for starting up a flowline (16)
suitable for conveying hydrocarbons, said flowline (16)
being extended over the seabed (12) from a wellhead
(10) and terminating at a joint end (17), said joint

end (17) being suitable for connection to a subsea riser (18) extended in a catenary, said flowline (16) being able to stretch;

characterized in that it comprises locking means
5 for fixing said joint end with respect to said seabed (12) for maintaining said flowline (16) in its stretched position.

7. The system as claimed in claim 6, characterized
10 in that said locking means include unidirectional arresting means (39) suited to allowing displacement of said joint end (17) in the direction of elongation of said flowline (16) and to prohibiting displacement of said joint end (17) in the opposite direction.

15 8. The system as claimed in claim 7, characterized in that it comprises guidance means including a moving trolley (32), to which said joint end (17) is suitable for connection, said moving trolley (32) being able to
20 slide on means forming rails (30).

9. The system as claimed in claim 8, characterized in that it comprises a base (28) anchored in the seabed (12), said rails (30) being solidly fixed to said base
25 (28).

10. The system as claimed in claim 8 or 9, characterized in that said unidirectional means (39) comprise means forming a rack (40), mounted in the
30 direction of said means forming rails (30), and means forming a ratchet (42) mounted on said trolley (32), said means forming a ratchet (42) being suitable for engagement in said means forming a rack (40).

35 11. The system as claimed in any one of claims 8 to 10, characterized in that said trolley (32) comprises first reception means (35) suitable for receiving said joint end.

12. The system as claimed in claim 9, characterized
in that said trolley (32) comprises, moreover, second
reception means suitable for receiving a free end of
5 said subsea riser for interconnecting said joint end
and said free end.